

will provide funding for important initiatives that take effect in January 2006, just a few days from now.

This morning the Senate passed, by the slimmest of margins, S. 1932, legislation to cut about \$40 billion from mandatory spending programs over the next 5 years. I did not support S. 1932 because I believe it contains bad policy on Medicaid, on welfare, and on child support enforcement, among other things.

For example, S. 1932 includes \$5 billion in cuts to the child support enforcement program, which will mean that an estimated \$19.6 million in child support funds will go uncollected in Montana over the next 10 years. That is money that should go to needy Montana kids.

As for Medicaid, S. 1932 contains almost \$2 billion in increased copays for Medicaid beneficiaries, as well as other Medicaid cuts. There are right ways to cut health care costs, through greater efficiencies that will save more money over time, and there is a wrong way to cut costs: on the backs of the Americans who can least afford to pay more for their health care. S. 1932 goes the wrong way and ignores the Senate's strong instruction to protect Medicaid beneficiaries from deep spending cuts. Last week 75 Senators supported a motion I offered in the Senate instructing budget conferees not to come back with a bill that included higher Medicaid copays and benefit cuts. Passage of S. 1932 is inconsistent with that vote.

S. 1932 is bad news for the welfare program as well. Despite a Senate vote of 64 to 27 in support of removing TANF from S. 1932, the bill that the Senate passed today does just that: it reauthorizes TANF through the budget reconciliation process, with a punitive and unnecessarily austere set of provisions. The TANF Program, originally passed in 1996, has successfully reduced welfare caseloads and focused on moving parents from welfare to work. Changes to the TANF Program should build on the success of 1996 reforms, not reverse that success, as S. 1932 will ultimately do.

Unfortunately, S. 1932 takes something that is not broken—and fixes it. For example, S. 1932 would raise work requirements without providing the funding needed to help States get people working. In fact, while S. 1932 includes \$1 billion in additional funding for childcare, that is \$7.4 billion short of what the Congressional Budget Office estimates to be the cost to States of meeting the TANF work requirements under this bill.

The Health and Welfare Relief Act would extend TANF for an additional year, maintaining current policy on this important program. The Health and Welfare Relief Act would also extend transitional medical assistance, TMA, for an additional year, a program that is critical for helping families make the transition from welfare to work.

The Health and Welfare Relief Act also contains a fix to the Medicare physician payment formula, which is set to cut Medicare physician payments by 4.4 percent on January 1. It prevents a cap on Medicare physical therapy from taking effect. And it extends an important provision for small rural hospitals' outpatient departments, helping them stay afloat. The bill also provides \$60 million for CMS administrative funding, which should be spent to help educate seniors about the new Medicare drug benefit. And it contains \$80 million for important legislation that I have sponsored related to high-risk pools, which are often the insurer of last resort.

Finally, the Health and Welfare Relief Act includes important legislation providing relief to individuals and States harmed by Hurricane Katrina. Like the Lincoln amendment voted on in the Senate November 3, this bill contains provisions to: provide temporary Medicaid relief to Katrina survivors; help States struggling to meet health care costs incurred as a result of Katrina; and assist providers dealing with Katrina-related uncompensated care costs.

I support the minority leader's efforts to pass these timely and critical provisions through the Health and Welfare Relief Act of 2005. While I do not support S. 1932, we should take the positive elements of that bill—as well as important provisions to aid Katrina victims—and pass them today.

NATIVE HAWAIIAN GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION ACT

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I rise to seek clarification from our esteemed majority leader, Senator FRIST, on the scheduling of S. 147, the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act, for consideration of the full Senate.

As you may recall, in December of last year, the majority and minority leaders joined us in reaching agreement on a schedule for the Senate's action on the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act bill with Senators DOMENICI and KYL. Specifically, in an exchange of correspondence that was made part of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for the 108th session of the Congress, the leaders agreed that S. 147 would be brought before the Senate on or before August 7, 2005.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, we commend our majority leader for his diligent efforts to secure the agreement of other Senators so that the Senate could proceed to consideration of this measure that is so important to the citizens of Hawaii. I know that Senator INOUE joins me in expressing our deep appreciation for our leader's action in laying down a cloture petition prior to the August recess when unanimous consent could not be achieved.

However, when the Senate reconvened in September, the tragic devastation of Hurricane Katrina clearly demanded the Congress's immediate ac-

tion, and thus, Senator INOUE and I agreed to the proposal of the minority and the majority leader, that the cloture petition be vitiated.

As we now approach the end of the first session of the 109th Congress—with pressing matters requiring the Nation's attention once again moving the Senate's consideration of S. 147 to the sidelines—we seek the guidance of the majority leader as to when our Leader anticipates that this measure may be brought before the Senate.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I thank the Senators from Hawaii for their review of our actions and intent in securing the Senate's action on S. 147. In addition to our two Senators from Hawaii, the Governor of Hawaii has consistently sought our action on this bill, and I am fully committed to assuring that the measure is brought before the Senate early in the next session of the Congress.

Mr. President, because a few of our colleagues are apparently not inclined to allow the bill to be considered under unanimous consent, it may be necessary to once again file a cloture petition to enable the measure to be given the Senate's full consideration. I want to assure my colleagues from Hawaii that the commitment I made in December of last year remains firm, and that I will work with them to take the appropriate steps to assure Senate action on S. 147 early in the second session of the 109th Congress.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader for his clarification and his commitment. We look forward to working with both leaders to bring S. 147 to the Senate floor at the earliest possible time in the second session of the 109th Congress.

ON THE PASSING OF EUGENE MCCARTHY

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the memory of Senator Eugene McCarthy, who passed away earlier this month.

I did not have the pleasure of knowing him. But I know how powerful and stirring he was—a man who was not afraid to speak the truth. A man who, in 1968, had already resided in the corridors of power for nearly 20 years, but had not been corrupted by them.

Accomplished and beloved by his constituents, Senator McCarthy could have rested on his laurels and kept his views to himself; he could have toed the line in the name of unity and loyalty to the president.

But that was not in Senator McCarthy's character. There is something about Minnesota that produces people and politicians who care more about what is right than about being liked. In this tradition, he was a clarion voice of courage and conviction.

Senator McCarthy retired after 22 years of service in Congress, but he never abandoned his beliefs or moderated his tone. He was not interested in conforming to society's expectations